

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 NEW DE 06878 020823Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00
NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /061 W
-----128049 020834Z /15

O R 020726Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1325
INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY LONDON

S E C R E T NEW DELHI 6878

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PINT, IN, AF
SUBJECT: INDIA'S ASSESSMENT OF SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN

REF: STATE 110740

1. IN MY MEETING WITH FOREIGN SECRETARY MEHTA YESTERDAY WE SPECULATED TOGETHER ON THE AFGHANISTAN SITUATION FOR SEVERAL MINUTES. IT IS CLEAR THAT HE HAS NO MORE FIRM INFORMATION THAN WE DO ON WHICH TO BASE JUDGMENTS.
2. INDIA'S POLICY IS TO RECOGNIZE GOVERNMENTS IN POWER WITHOUT REGARDS TO IDEOLOGY. SINCE THE NEW AFGHAN REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL SEEMS TO BE FIRMLY IN CONTROL, MEHTA SAID THAT INDIA SAW NO POINT IN DELAYING RECOGNITION AND WOULD BE PROCEEDING TO EXTEND IT PROMPTLY (AS THE GOI DID LATER IN THE DAY).

3. HE SAID THE REPORT THAT THE INDIAN AMBASSADOR IN
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KABUL HAD MET WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NEW REGIME ON APRIL 28 WAS IN ERROR(AS REPORTED ALSO IN KABUL 3422). HE IDENTIFIED THE NEW LEADERS AS COMMUNISTS BUT WAS UNWILLING TO SPECULATE ON HOW CLOSELY THEY MIGHT BE TIED TO RUSSIA. WHEN SOVIET AMBASSADOR VORONTSOV CALLED ON PRIME MINISTER DESAI APRIL 28, MEHTA SAID, HE ASKED THE PM IF HE HAD INFORMATION ON THE AFGHANISTAN SITUATION AND

NATURE OF THE NEW REGIME. MEHTA WONDERED IF THAT WAS PERHAPS A DISINGENOUS INQUIRY, AND IT SUGGESTS TO ME THAT DISCUSSION OF THE AFGHAN SITUATIONS WAS NOT THE PURPOSE OF THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR'S CALL ON THE PM (ANYMORE THAN IT WAS OF MY AND SIR JOHN THOMSON'S CALLS OF THE SAME DATE, THOUGH SO REPORTED IN THE PRESS).

4. IN VIEW OF THE FOREGOING, UNLESS FURTHER INSTRUCTED I PLAN NOT TO PROCEED IMMEDIATELY IN SEEKING A FRESH HIGH-LEVEL APPOINTMENT TO DISCUSS THE AFGHAN SITUATION. WE SHALL, HOWEVER, SEEK INFORMATION AT A LOWER LEVEL ON HOW AMBASSADOR SINGH IS REPORTING THE SITUATION, THOUGH WE PRESUME THAT OUR KABUL EMBASSY HAS MORE DIRECT ACCESS TO HIS VIEWS.
GOHEEN

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